

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for validating a new sales lead from an agent employed in a sales lead processing entity, the method comprising:
  - inputting new sales lead information representing a new sales lead from an agent using an agent computer interface;
  - transmitting the new sales lead information to a lead processing portion, the lead processing portion having a leads memory portion, the leads memory portion storing existing sales lead information relating to existing sales leads;
  - comparing the new sales lead information with the existing sales lead information;
- 10 determining if there is a match between the new sales lead information and any of the existing sales lead information;
  - tagging the new sales lead information as a duplicate lead based on a determination that there is a match between the new sales lead information and any of the existing sales lead information.
- 15 2. The method of claim 1, further including forwarding the new sales lead information, which is tagged as a duplicate lead for further processing, the further processing including further comparing the new sales lead information with the existing sales lead information.
- 20 3. The method of claim 2, wherein the further processing is performed by a human reviewer.
4. The method of claim 2, wherein the further processing is performed to determine whether to categorize the new lead as an agent generated lead, the categorizing the lead as agent

lead distinguishing the lead as business generated by efforts of the sales agent weighed against involvement of the sales lead processing entity in procurement of the new sales lead.

5. The method of claim 4, further including adjusting a commission of the sales agent based on the determination of whether to categorize the new lead as an agent generated lead.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the determining if there is a match between the new sales lead information and any of the existing sales lead information is performed in parallel to the sales agent working the new sales lead.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein the determining if there is a match between the new sales lead information and any of the existing sales lead information is performed prior to the sales agent working the new sales lead.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein results based on the determining if there is a match between the new sales lead information and any of the existing sales lead information is output to the sales agent computer interface for viewing by the sales agent.

15 9. The method of claim 1, wherein the transmitting the new sales lead information to the lead processing portion includes loading the new sales lead information into the leads memory portion in conjunction with assigning a new lead identifier number to the new sales lead based on the new sales lead information, and wherein each of the existing sales leads in the leads memory portion have previously been assigned a respective existing lead identifier number, upon 20 the existing sales leads having been initially loaded into the leads memory portion; and the determining if there is a match between the new sales lead information and any of the existing sales lead information includes comparing the new lead identifier number with each of the existing lead identifier numbers.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein the existing lead identifier numbers and the new lead identifier number is generated based on name and address information in the existing sales lead information and the new lead information, respectively.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein the transmitting the new sales lead information to 5 a lead processing portion is performed over the internet.

12. The method of claim 1, further including the step of retaining the new sales lead information of the new sales lead, which has been tagged as a duplicate, in the lead processing portion pending a review by a sales management person.

13. The method of claim 12, further including the sales management person working 10 with the agent to address correctness of the new sales lead being tagged as a duplicate.

14. The method of claim 13, further including the sales management person reviewing a history of an existing sales lead, which was determined to be a match to the new sales lead.

15. The method of claim 1, further including:  
inputting second new sales lead information representing a further new sales lead from a second agent using a second agent computer interface;  
transmitting the second new sales lead information to the lead processing portion;  
comparing the second new sales lead information with the existing sales lead information;  
determining that there is not a match between the second new sales lead information and any of the existing sales lead information; and  
releasing the new sales lead for working by the second agent.

16. A computer-implemented system for validating a new sales lead from an agent employed in a sales lead processing entity, the computer-implemented system comprising:

an agent processor that inputs new sales lead information representing a new sales lead from an agent;

5 a communication network that transmits the new sales lead information to a lead processing portion;

the lead processing portion;

an existing leads memory portion, the existing leads memory portion storing existing sales lead information relating to existing sales leads;

10 the lead processing portion comparing the new sales lead information with the existing sales lead information, and determining if there is a match between the new sales lead information and any of the existing sales lead information, the lead processing portion tagging the new sales lead information as a duplicate lead based on a determination that there is a match between the new sales lead information and any of the existing sales lead information; and

15 wherein the lead processing portion retains the new sales lead, which is tagged as a duplicate, pending a sales management person review.

17. The computer-implemented system of claim 16, wherein the lead processing portion loads the new sales lead information into the existing leads memory portion in conjunction with assigning a new lead identifier number to the new sales lead based on the new sales lead information, and wherein each of the existing sales leads in the existing leads memory portion have previously been assigned a respective existing lead identifier number, upon the existing sales leads having been initially loaded into the existing leads memory portion; and

the determining if there is a match between the new sales lead information and any of the existing sales lead information includes comparing the new lead identifier number with each of the existing lead identifier numbers.

18. The computer-implemented system of claim 17, wherein the existing lead

5 identifier numbers and the new lead identifier number is generated based on name and address information in the existing sales lead information and the new lead information, respectively.

19. A method for validating a new sales lead from an agent employed in a sales lead

processing entity, the method comprising:

inputting new sales lead information representing a new sales lead from an agent using an

10 agent computer interface;

transmitting the new sales lead information to a lead processing portion, the lead processing portion having a leads memory portion, the leads memory portion storing existing sales lead information relating to existing sales leads;

comparing the new sales lead information with the existing sales lead information;

15 determining if there is a match between the new sales lead information and any of the existing sales lead information;

tagging the new sales lead information as a duplicate lead based on a determination that there is a match between the new sales lead information and any of the existing sales lead information;

20 the method further including forwarding the new sales lead information, which is tagged as a duplicate lead for further processing, the further processing including further comparing the new sales lead information with the existing sales lead information;

wherein the further processing is performed to determine whether to categorize the new lead as an agent generated lead, the categorizing the lead as agent lead distinguishing the lead as business generated by efforts of the sales agent weighed against involvement of the sales lead processing entity in procurement of the new sales lead; and

- 5        wherein the determining if there is a match between the new sales lead information and any of the existing sales lead information is performed in parallel to the sales agent working the new sales lead.